

Sulphur Springs Hotel  
(Sulphur Springs Arcade)  
8122 N. Nebraska Avenue  
Tampa  
Hillsborough County  
Florida

HABS No. FL-355

HABS  
FLA,  
29-TAMP,  
2-

PHOTOGRAPH

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SULPHUR SPRINGS HOTEL  
(Sulphur Springs Arcade)

HABS No. FL-355

Location: 8122 N. Nebraska Avenue, Tampa, Hillsborough County,  
Florida.

Present Use: Demolished 1976.

Significance: The hotel was situated near the "miraculous" mineral waters of Hillsborough River and represents an excellent example of a resort recreation facility of early 20th century. The most distinguished feature of the hotel was its first and second floor front arcade in classical style.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1925-26.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Josiah T. Richardson was the original owner of the property. In the late 1920s Richardson defaulted and the building was sold to South Carolina tobacco grower J.F. Hendrick. At his death the property passed to his five grandchildren. They, as estate holders, exerted control over leases for the ground floor stores. In order to bring in new businesses, they refused lease renewals for many of the original shops. In recent years the City of Tampa took over the swimming pool and turned it into a public facility. The hotel and the shops remained until 1975. The following year the entire building was demolished.
4. Original plans and construction: The second floor had thirty-nine hotel rooms and fourteen apartments and offices. Original number of downstairs shops is not known.
5. Alterations and additions: Numerous alterations had been made to the building in the area within the arcade. Shopfronts and large glass windows had been added.

B. Historical Context: Sulphur Springs is located in the northern section of Tampa and is on the outskirts of the once-revered Hillsborough River. The name Sulphur Springs is derived from the river's rich source of fresh mineral water. In the past the "miraculous" health qualities of the water attracted people and presented potential opportunities for development. The neighboring Indians drank the water. In the 1850s white pioneers tried the water and eventually decided to settle in Sulphur Springs. By 1880 Sulphur Springs was already a popular and outing spot for local residents and tourists. Facilities had been built

to accommodate recreational uses. By the turn of the century H.B. Plant's railroad and the city's street car service in the Sulphur Springs area were considered to be a guarantee for further development of the northern section of urban Hillsborough County. It was not so until the 1920s Florida land boom and a large purchase along the Hillsborough River by Josiah Richardson that Sulphur Springs grew into a residential area. To take advantage of the new growth, Richardson took over the declining recreational facilities and built a new pool, a bandstand, a water tower, and the Sulphur Springs Hotel.

There was a roller coaster on the site of the future hotel.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The long two-story double arcade along the front was the hotel's most conspicuous feature. This accounts for the hotel's popular name, Sulphur Springs Arcade.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair at the time of demolition.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The plan was rectangular. The front first floor arcade was sixteen bays. The second floor arcade was approximately forty-five bays. Dimensions are not available.
2. Foundation: Spread footings.
3. Walls: Masonry with plaster, painted white.
4. Structural system, framing: Reinforced concrete.
5. Porches: The ground floor arcade consisted of reinforced concrete elliptical arches supported on square columns. The second floor porch was similar, except that it had smaller arches. A pent roof was situated between the main flat roof and the second floor, sheltering the first and second floor arcades.
6. Chimneys: None.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Full panel beveled glass in wood.
  - b. Windows: Double-hung sash windows. Operable skylights from roof to ground floor for light and ventilation.
8. Roof: Low, flat sloping; built-up roof. Parapet wall.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Ground floor: Commercial shops along arcade.
- b. Second floor: Central lobby and hotel rooms and apartments.

2. Stairways: Concrete with brass nosings; wrought-iron rails.

3. Flooring: 1" X 4" pine flooring.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster on metal lath. The ceilings in the ground floor shops were twenty feet high.

5. Doors: Full panel doors and fifteen-light beveled glass in wood doors.

6. Decorative features and trim: Ornamental plaster cornice. Decorative plaster reliefs at ceiling light fixtures throughout building.

7. Hardware: Cast bronze entry hardware.

8. Mechanic equipment:

- a. Ventilation: Natural ventilation through skylights.
- b. Lighting: Electric.
- c. Plumbing: Cast-iron plumbing.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting and orientation: The building faced east on Nebraska Avenue in a residential area, north of the Hillsborough River and Sulphur Springs pool.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Bibliography:

Hillsborough County Records. Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Hillsborough County Courthouse, Tampa, Florida.

"Sulphur Springs Arcade", historical survey, Florida Department of State, Division of Archives, History and Records management, Bureau of Historic Properties, Tallahassee, Florida.

SULPHUR SPRINGS HOTEL  
HABS No. FL-355 (page 4)

Prepared by:

Susan McCown  
Historian  
Historic American Buildings  
Survey  
Summer 1982